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# Arabia



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# The Arabian Mission.

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# NEGLECTED ARABIA.

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April - June, 1912.

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## The Story of the Annual Meeting.

Perhaps someone will say that an annual meeting of the Arabian Mission cannot be a very good subject for a story, but of course you have never attended one. There is much to tell about this particular one even before it began.

In Busrah we thought about and planned for it with considerable interest for it was to be held here.

It had been practically decided that we would meet in January, but about the middle of September we suddenly received the information that it would be early in November. To most of us this was good news, because November is a very pleasant month for sea travelling, while later on it is usually rough and stormy. And also we could make the people more comfortable at that time than in January when it often is bitterly cold in Busrah, where our houses are not very well adapted for keeping us warm. But to the language students, who were happy in the thought that examinations were still three months away, the change to the earlier date was perhaps not so welcome.

As the time for the meeting drew near, and the cholera, which had been raging fiercely in Busrah during the Summer, had not yet abated, we began to feel some anxiety at the thought of the entire mission staff being exposed to this dreadful disease. On hearing the reports from Busrah the Bahrein missionaries sent letters to the various stations urging that the meeting be held there, and we agreed that this was the wisest thing to do. The cholera had practically subsided before we left and our ship had a clean bill of health to show to the quarantine officer at Bahrein, which saved us the unpleasant experience of having to spend some days in the quarantine camp there.

We had scarcely anchored in Bahrein harbor before a large number of Arabs, who were bound for Bombay, fairly overcrowded the ship. In their eagerness to get on board they not only monopolized the

ship's ladders, but also lifted bedding, boxes, baskets of provisions, chickens, parrots, and innumerable other things with ropes over the sides of the boat until the deck was completely filled. They caused us so much delay in getting off that it was long after dark before we got on shore, and as a consequence we had great difficulty in getting donkeys to convey our trunks and heavy luggage to the mission houses. Our faithful native helpers insisted on seeing to it that every piece arrived safely, and I heard the next day that they had worked until about two o'clock in the morning. The Muscat missionaries and those from home arrived two days later, and then our annual meeting began.

To accommodate a gathering of thirty-three people is by no means an easy task, and yet it was so beautifully done that one might have thought it a frequent occurrence with the Bahrein missionaries. Our daily program was: Morning prayers at eight-thirty; business sessions from nine-thirty to twelve, and from one-thirty to four; and at eight o'clock a devotional meeting and evening prayers. The morning meetings were led by the missionaries in turn, the subjects being taken from the life of St. Paul. Dr. Zwemer spoke on "Paul's Fervent Love," Mr. Pennings on "Christ the Center of Paul's Life and Actions," Dr. Harrison on "Paul's Vision of the Saviour," Dr. Cantine on "Paul's Humility," Mr. Dykstra on "Paul's Willingness to Bear the Reproach of Christ," and so on every morning throughout the two weeks of our stay. For the evening devotional meetings we had such subjects as "How to Win the Moslem Heart," "Personal Bible Study," "The Holy Spirit in Our Lives," "A Message From the Church at Home," "Our Arabian Sisters," "A Survey of the Mohammedan World," "Report From the Lucknow Conference," "Esprit de Corps," and others equally helpful and interesting.

About the best part of our business sessions was the reading of the reports on the past year's work. They would have interested all who love missions, and many who do not because they know so little about them. We heard of a medical tour taken far in the interior of Oman, where a doctor had never been seen. On this tour over eight hundred Scriptures were left in the hands of the people to teach them more about the Great Physician at whose bidding our missionaries go out to relieve suffering. We were told about new work begun in Linga, a populous Arab town on the Persian side of the Gulf; of trips to Katif on the mainland; of weeks spent among the women of Zobeir; of walks over steep mountain passes when the sea was too rough to venture out in a small boat in order that the women of Muttrah should not miss the bi-weekly visit of the missionary. But the reports speak of more than mere work



done. They tell us of the missionary's hopes and fears, of his encouragements and discouragements, of oppositions faced and obstacles overcome, of special needs for the future. And we know, though we are not told this, that there have been hardships and loneliness to endure.

After hearing the reports from the various stations we began to plan for the new year. This is always interesting because humanly speaking it is of great importance. The conditions vary greatly in our different stations and we aim to put each one where he is needed most and seems to fit best. No doubt the Lord can use any of us anywhere, but granting that this is true, we can probably serve Him best if we are in a position where we can do our best work. Our working force, which numbers about twenty this year, was increased by the four missionaries who passed their second language examination.

Those who have been watching the reports about Kuwait since we reentered it, will be glad to hear that we appointed three missionaries there this year—a clergyman, a medical man, and a medical woman. And it will rejoice the hearts of those who love and pray for Muscat and the Oman field, that it now has three times the number of missionaries it had for so many years. On the other hand the disturbed conditions in Turkey caused us to take a slightly backward step by recalling the man from Amara and giving it for this year only part of a missionary's time. Bahrein is happy in the thought of once more having a woman doctor who can devote her time to medical work among the women there. The mission hopes to see its educational work take a decided step forward this year. We are also making investigations in regard to certain branches of industrial work because the need seems to point that way. One thing of especial interest was a letter from the "Mission to Lepers in India and the East" stating that they wish to cooperate with our mission in doing something for the lepers of Arabia. The Muscat missionaries were appointed a committee to correspond with them and to find a plan for developing this work in the Oman field.

We were glad to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Shaw who were sent out by the University of Michigan for work in Busrah, and also our new doctor, Miss Hosmon. With new workers ready to enter the new fields to which God's providence has led us, it but needs a fuller consecration in order that the coming year may be one of great blessing to us and to this people who are His whom we serve.

ELIZABETH CANTINE.

## In Pursuit of a Medical Diploma.

Necessity is the mother of exertion as well as invention, and the necessity of getting a Turkish Medical Diploma is no exception. Now there may be those who do not appreciate the value of a Turkish Diploma out here, but they are hardly to be found in the ranks of the Doctors, whose work has been stopped for lack of one. And so it transpired that when vacation time came, it seemed best not to spend it in catching butterflies, nor even in digesting heavy Arabic roots, but in the pursuit of big game in Constantinople.

It was an interesting trip from Kuweit to Constantinople. We said goodbye to Mr. Pennings, one fine June evening, and had a beautiful night run on one of the Skeikh's water boats to Fau, which is a small town just at the mouth of the river. All well so far, but against the swollen spring freshets, and a hard North wind, the rest of the trip to Busrah was rather vigorous exercise. We had only a row boat, for the water boat left us at Fau. It took three days, and a part of that time we had to pull the boat along with a rope, to make any headway at all. Three boatmen and one other individual pulled along with the rope. One boatman waded, by the side of the boat, keeping her nose out of trouble. We found our bare feet not as tough as they used to be, and we reached Busrah somewhat the worse for wear. Once arrived, we found we must wait four days for a Baghdad steamer.

A four days' stay in Busrah was decidedly not in the schedule, for my time was very short, still a visit with the Dr. and Mrs. Cantine is compensation for a good deal. Thursday night we got on board, for Baghdad, and six days later we had our first look at that city of ancient romance, but present mud walls, narrow streets and dirty children. At Amara there was an hour's visit with Mr. Moerdyk, and we almost wished it might have been four days. The C. M. S. Mission is the only Protestant work in Baghdad. Dr. Johnson and those with him appear to have about ten times the opportunity that they can overtake. From him I learned that there is the choice of two routes from Baghdad, the carriage road to Aleppo, taking eighteen days, and the Post to Damascus, ten days. We were warned that the Damascus trip is a hard one, but "Young Doctors rush in where angels fear to tread," and we went with the Damascus Post.

Of course, there were certain supplies to get for the ten days' trip, but the cuisine bears little resemblance to Delmonico's, and the supplies were comparatively few and cheap,—some flour, some rice, some bread. Out of my inexperience, I added some dates and cheese. Four skins for water were another necessity. If I had known then

what the inside of those water skins tasted like, I should have made a desperate effort to wash them out, but "Where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise."

Friday night we were off, about half an hour after sundown, and thirty-six hours later we rode into Hit, having been in the saddle about thirty hours of that time. Hit is the last point on the river. Here we fill our water skins, change our camels, and prepare for the desert ride of seven days to Damascus. This time, however, we had to wait a day at Hit, because there was only a single fresh camel ready, and we needed two. One for the postman and one for myself. It was in Hit that I saw the most lonely man that I met on the trip. A single isolated Protestant Christian, from up in the North country, around Mardin, he was working for the Irrigation company, and holding fast to his confession, even in the face of considerable persecution. We had prayers together, and I promised to look up the question of expense to Beirut College, for he wanted to send his boy there next year. Monday morning bright and early we were off. We watched the sun rise over the city of Hit, now some distance away. Hit is built on quite an eminence and its one solitary minaret is visible for a long distance. Four hours from Hit we passed through Kubeisa, a little village clustered around a small water supply, and from there on we set our faces to the West till we came to the next human habitation, which was to be Damascus itself.

The desert between Baghdad and Damascus, is as monotonous a piece of country as can easily be imagined. For the first three days, the soil was apparently of the same character as between the Tigris and Euphrates. Roughly half way across, there are two wells, separated by rather less than twenty-four hours' riding. Everything utterly bare and desolate. The landscape as flat as a parlor floor, a great part of the time, as far as the eye can reach, not the least roll discernible. Not a sign of a human habitation, and indeed at first, no sign of life of any sort. On closer observation, however, this last judgment has to be changed. An occasional rabbit, a solitary jereboa, a few sparrows, two butterflies, any number of small lizards of several varieties. Nothing very remarkable, except that such animals can live out in the midst of that dry and empty waste, a hundred miles from any water that we know anything about.

There is nothing poetic in riding a camel, nor is there anything very difficult, provided you get a good one. We did not make any speed records on this trip. The camels went along at a fair walk, just as many hours a day as was possible. In this case, the amount of time in the saddle was a trifle better than eighteen out of the twenty-four, on the average. The postman explained at the



THE EAST GATE, DAMASCUS.

start that he would, of course, be more or less delayed by my presence. I take considerable pleasure in the fact that twice out in the desert, when time came to start in the morning, it was the "Inglese" who woke him up, and started the caravan out. A good deal has been written about the endurance of the Arab. It may not be all myth, but so far I have never seen one, whom an American, who likes to rough it, need fear to measure up against. We all had very fair mounts, and made a very cheerful company as we rode along. There were three of us, the postman, myself and another Arab on his way to Damascus. We took turns at singing, for the crowd's entertainment. When my turn came I contributed from a limited repertoire of Gospel Hymns. The style of music was new to them, and they seemed to enjoy it very much. I wish they could have understood the words.

It was toward the end of June and in the middle of the day the sun was very hot. Looking off to the distance, the layers of air next the ground reflected light like a sheet of water. Often if the landscape afforded a small hill, it would be reflected in surface of this sham lake. Most of the days, the air was perfectly still, for a large part of the day at least, and small whirlwinds were very common. I have counted as many as eight or ten in sight at once. Some very small, but others as clear cut as flexible stove pipes and extending from the earth up to a cloud above. It was very surprising too, as hot as the days might be, the nights were very cold. Starting off in the morning two hours before the sun rose, we rejoiced at its appearance. The same sun that a few hours later was to make us fear sunstroke, even with a topee and an umbrella.

Three days out we come to the first well. To reach it we made a dip to the South for a short distance, coming to a broken rocky country, where the hills seemed to be of considerable size. Leaving the well, we emerged shortly on to a level country again, but apparently on higher ground. From this point on, the country was more rolling and diversified to some degree by hills. The soil too, was of a distinctly different character. For a whole day or more we walked along what looked like the bed of wadi, the ground here being a sort of red sand. And so our camels walked and walked, and walked till one morning the postman said that Damascus was only about twenty-four hours away.

We rode all that day and into the next night till we arrived, just about twenty-three hours. Dr. McKinnon of the Edinburgh Medical Mission has a most beautiful hospital in Damascus, and he received his unexpected guest most cordially. I was palmed off on the head nurse as a tramp, not at all a difficult process. The worst hardship of the trip was going without washing my face for four

days. I had, however, indulged in that luxury before arrival at the hospital. Dr. McKinnon has the best equipped Missionary Hospital that it has been my privilege to see. In one ward hangs a picture of Queen Victoria, and in another of Queen Alexandra. A personal gift in each instance.

The trip took us to no other city as interesting as Damascus. The suk, which with all the bright colors, made one think of a kaleidoscope. The narrow streets, with crowds of people; the displays of Damascus brass work in some of the shops; the melancholy contrast between old Roman foundations, with precision and power in every line, and the poor mud-brick superstructure of degenerate modern days all make Damascus a wonderful city.

P. W. HARRISON.



### In the Operating Room.

The long-looked-for operation day has come! Khadija has traveled all the way from Naseriah, on the famous old Tigris river, to Busrah. She left her blind husband and her two little children to get along as best they could, in hopes that she would soon return well and strong, and able to earn a better living for her little family. In spite of great difficulties, her mother has come with her to protect her, as she is young and has never traveled before. They have met many who have been operated on for stone, in the Busrah hospital; and from all they have heard they have decided that Khadija must have a stone, and if that can only be removed, she will become well and strong. So the little hoard of money was carefully fastened in a dirty bit of old cloth, and concealed on the mother's person. All the way down they ate only dry bread and what they could manage to beg from the other passengers.

At last they reached Busrah and went to the Lansing Memorial dispensary. There they met Jasmine, the Bible woman, who talked to them of Jesus and read to them out of the Bible and prayed with them. Then they were called into the consulting room, and what was their surprise to be assured that Khadija did not have a stone, but that she would need another operation. It was hoped that a radical one might be done and all her terrible symptoms cured permanently; but after consulting with the other physician just the night before the operation, it was decided that only temporary relief could be obtained. Knowing the great hope Khadija and her mother had of her complete recovery, it was very difficult to tell them and we feared they would not understand. Yet when operation morning came and all was ready, it seemed

only right to explain that poor Khadija could never be entirely cured. So, gently, the sad news was broken, and the alternative of the lesser operation given. They bore it pretty well, those lonely women, so far away from home. But suddenly the dear old mother went to the other end of the room, and from her little hoard quickly brought two dollars and said, "Do take this money and cure my poor daughter." As they certainly seemed poor, nothing had been requested from them for the operation. So now, as patiently as we could, we explained that we would gladly and freely do everything to cure Khadija, but that she had waited too long before coming, and the disease had gone beyond hope of complete recovery. So, sadly, they submitted to the simpler operation. Soon Khadija was back in her bed again and coming out from the effects of the chloroform. She improved very much and went back to her home much stronger, with all her symptoms practically gone. But, oh! how sad to know that no power on earth can cure her at this late day. Perhaps ere a year has passed her life will have ended. But at least she will have been helped some spiritually and physically.

Next comes Butera. She, poor woman, has been divorced by her husband, because of her sad physical state ever since her child was born three years ago. She comes for operation, and we gladly assure her that in all probability she can be cured. How happy she is at the prospect! Then she need no more shrink and fear to be among others lest they shun her. It proves to be a long, tedious and difficult operation, but is at last successfully finished. Although all who have helped have aching backs and arms, still it is worth it to help poor Butera. No doubt when she goes home she will send many others needing operation. If it had not been for the good operating table, how much more difficult the work would have been.

Um Khathem also has come to us from up country (Amara). The moment she saw us, her mother said that Um Khathem had a stone, and on examination it proved to be so; and was the cause of sleepless nights and days full of misery. As it was not large, it was removed without either cutting or crushing, and soon her mother was rejoiced to have the dreadful stone in her hand to carry away and show to all interested friends, far and near. When Um Khathem herself woke from her merciful unconsciousness, how glad she was to see it and to be told that she need fear no more pain. Now she could prove the truth of her words to the Bible woman: "If God wills, I will love Jesus."

Oh, that we could do a spiritual operation for each of the thousands treated every year in dispensary, and open up their hearts to receive Jesus in faith. Oh, that they believed in His atoning death. Oh, that

we could draw away the veil that hides from them His surpassing love and the agonizing Cross; how He was tempted, bled, and died for them, and is now interceding before God that they, too, might be happy for evermore and share in His glory.

But we can only tell them and pray and keep on working to relieve their suffering, believing that God's Holy Spirit will do this great major operation, on which the eternal life of each one depends. It remains for the church at home to send more evangelistic workers, specially trained and practiced in prevailing prayer, to help us in carrying out more effective preparations for these great operations about to be performed to save souls from everlasting death.

EMMA H. WORRALL.



### Touring in Oman.

Ezekiel's prophecy, "and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh," occurs to the missionary traveler in Oman with redoubled force. For Oman is a land of sterile rocks, bare as a bone, and stony, unproductive valleys; in very truth a "land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof." However, there are exceptions to this. Here and there wells or natural springs furnish the life-giving water, and forthwith the "desert blossoms like a rose." Vigorous palm trees and luxuriant fodder furnish a sample of what the country would be were it supplied with an abundance of water. It is not so much the country itself, however, as the inhabitants that demand the attention of the touring missionary. Therefore, instead of giving a chronological report of a recent trip into the interior, we will mention a few of the more prominent experiences common to all missionary touring in Oman.

First we wish to call attention to two institutions, the one the social center, and the second the social pledge, both of which come into great prominence for the traveler in Oman. The first of these, the social center, is the "majlis." The literal meaning of this word is "a place for sitting." Usually it consists of a large hut. The roof of palm-branches is supported on pillars, and the floor is spread with mats or clean sand and pebbles. Usually there is also a hearth for making coffee.

In Oman true friendship is rare, and the interchange of visits between friends is not common. Moreover, most people are poor and cannot afford a special guest room, while besides all this, religion forbids anyone but the very nearest relatives seeing the faces of the women of the house. Hence it is impossible for most to entertain



visitors at their homes. The place of this is supplied by the public *majlis*. It is here that the men of the village find the social life which they miss at home. Here news is exchanged and the petty politics of the village are discussed from every conceivable standpoint. Thither the traveler repairs upon his arrival to be entertained during his stay as the common guest of the village at the expense of the sheikh.

The second institution, the social pledge, is coffee. For among the Arabs of Arabia, and especially those of Oman, its use has come to have a significance that can hardly be appreciated by anyone from the West. No matter how good and plentiful the food supplied, if coffee is not served to him, the visitor considers himself badly used and complains of niggardly treatment. While, on the other hand, if coffee be served often and abundantly, the guest considers himself greatly honored, no matter how poor the food provided.

The missionary on his tours has continual experience with both these institutions. Upon his arrival he at once betakes himself to the *majlis*. The sheikh is as a rule close at hand, but if not, there are always some willing messengers ready to inform him of the arrival. The donkeys are now unloaded and the saddle bags deposited along the side of the *majlis* near the travelers. But the arrival of guests is a sign to all to gather and see who has come, and soon the guests are surrounded by a ring of interested and inquisitive Arabs. As each arrives, no matter what his condition, it is incumbent upon the visitor to arise and shake hands, a process that is liable to prove rather tiring to the way-weary traveler, the more so because he must rise, not from a chair, but from the ground.

As a rule the sheikh at once gives orders to prepare coffee, in fact, generally comes prepared with a handful of green coffee for that very purpose. The coffee utensils are generally close at hand. A fire is made on the rude hearth; while an old brew of coffee is brought to a boil, the green coffee is roasted, and ere long the delicious aroma of roasting coffee arouses pleasing anticipations in the tired "son of the way" as the Koran calls the traveler. In Oman they have the singular and unvarying custom of serving something sweet before coffee, and as a rule a platter of dates is passed around. After this preliminary part has been disposed of, coffee is at once served, strong and black, in small cups. Generally each one drinks thrice, though as a mark of special favor, a sheikh may urge you to take a fourth cup. Sometimes coffee is served as frequently as three times within an hour after the visitor's arrival.

After coffee has been served and the news of the day has been exchanged, the way has been prepared for the work of the colporteur, who now seizes the opportunity by opening his saddle-bags of edu-

cational books and Scriptures while the crowd of onlookers is still at hand. Much depends upon the attitude the village-schoolmaster and mullah will take. If they refuse to buy and shake their heads in dubious warning, the sales are sure to be small. If on the other hand they buy themselves and show no prejudice against the Christian Scriptures, the chances are that the reverse will be the case. Many of those who desire to show off their wisdom by calling for every conceivable book finally buy very little, while others who are more quiet are liable to be the best buyers. Often the sheikh pretends to buy several books in the beginning just to encourage others to buy, though finally his purchases amount to very little. The sale of educational books naturally leads to the sale of Scriptures. It is not to be expected that many shall buy out of real interest in our Bible. The Mohammedan belief that our Scriptures are not the original ones but have been corrupted is very common among Moslems. Many buy the Gospels because they are relatively cheap, and comparatively few because they are thoroughly interested.

What becomes of all the Scriptures sold. This is a hard question to answer. No doubt some of them are destroyed by unfriendly and fanatic mullahs after the colporteur has left. Others are no doubt read, though some do not understand what they read, owing to their preconceived ideas as to what religion consists of. Still just as the Holy Spirit must apply the Word to the heart of the reader if he is to understand spiritual truth, so we also trust that the same Spirit of God will cause those who buy to read the Bible. God's Word shall not return unto Him void. "Everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh." We know that many of the converts from Islam were converted by the reading of the Bible; and we hope and trust that the good seed sown by these means in all our fields will in its own time bring forth abundant fruit.

G. J. PENNINGS.



### A Note on Ojeir.

On Monday, October 2nd, 1911, Habib Eshoo, Dr. Mylrea's assistant at the hospital, and I left for Ojeir with books and medicines, hoping to get inland to Hassa, but we failed. It would be a long story to tell of Turkish duplicity, and how once and again we were disappointed because we were not allowed to start with the caravan inland. The rumors of the war in Tripoli and special instructions recently received, so we were told, prohibiting the entrance of all foreigners into the province of Hassa, closed the door in our

faces; and so our hopes of entering Hassa for the third time and of being able on this third visit to keep the door ajar, failed. We have not given up, but hope to try again during the year; meanwhile may we not ask for united prayer that this closed door may soon be opened. Ojeir is the only gateway, except Katif, from Bahrein into Hassa. The photographs are the first ever taken of this part of Arabia.

The distance from Menamah to Ojeir by native boat is about twenty hours, although sometimes the journey is made in twelve. One is in sight of land the whole way, for as soon as Jebel Dukhan disappears, the custom house at Ojeir can be seen. I have made three visits to this port, but there have been no improvements whatever in building or facilities for landing cargo for the last twenty years. The wharf or jetty is built out to a distance of about fifty feet, south-southeast from Ojeir, and native boats are able to come close alongside the wharf, which is built of stone filled in with rubbish.

The only building of any importance is the custom warehouse. It is a rectangle about 100 x 200 yards, surrounded by go-downs, one-half of which are in bad repair. The building occupied by the Mudir stands at the entrance of the enclosure in the middle of the southwest wall of the custom house. It has four rooms below and two above, all in bad condition and hardly fit for residence. About 600 yards to the northwest of the custom warehouse stands a small mud fort called Raka, and southwest from that another fort called Abu Zahmool. Each of these forts is circular, with a parapet, without guns and in bad repair. Between them and closer to the Raka fort is a well of fresh water which supplies Ojeir. The water is fairly good, although slightly brackish. The plain around these forts is



THE LANDING PLACE, OJEIR

of desert sand sloping to the sea. There is no vegetation whatever except beyond Raka fort where there are remnants of the old town and date gardens no longer cultivated. The fort at Raka marks an old settlement of the same name, as many of the deeds of transfer and the sale of property in Hassa are signed by the Kadhi of Raka.

Ojeir has a *Mudir*, Abdul Wadood, a custom house officer and a tax collector. The total number of soldiers and servants under these officials is perhaps sixty. Each fort has ten soldiers. The others are housed in the custom warehouse.

According to information received, about 250,000 bags of rice are landed at Ojeir every year. A caravan of from two hundred to six hundred camels leaves every week for Hassa. The first part of the journey is through the desert, gradually rising until four hours from Hassa one reaches the towns of Jissa and Jufair. Steamer anchorage is at least two hours sailing in ordinary wind from Ojeir wharf.

During our stay the weary hours were not altogether wasted. We sold a number of Scriptures and had an interesting time with the soldiers and the *Mudir*. All of them were anxious to have their photographs taken, and some of them were willing to study the portrait of Christ which we showed them in the Gospel.

S. M. ZWEMER.



## Ten Years of Weather by the Clock in Bahrein.

There is no topic of conversation so widely used in Europe or America as that of the weather. Everywhere in the Occident the weather is recognized as a convenient opening for the exchange of ideas on any subject, between any two people. After the conventional "How are you?" comes the even more conventional "Lovely day, isn't it?" and so on. In the Orient, however, the weather is seldom discussed, and to venture an opinion on what weather we may expect a few hours hence is blasphemy in the ears of a Moslem. To any query on the subject he invariably replies, "God knows." Among the various duties of the Physician in Charge of Mason Memorial Hospital is that of Meteorologist to the Government of India. The science of meteorology is still in its infancy, and the work which is being done by meteorologists all over the world is little understood or appreciated by the man in the street, who laughingly makes fun of "The Weather Man" because he cannot always forecast the

weather correctly. As a matter of fact forecasting the weather is the least of the duties of a meteorologist and indeed occupies no place at all in our work here. It must be remembered that weather in the Tropics is not the uncertain thing that we know at home and talk about and grumble about so much. The rains and storms have their place in the year's curriculum and are generally content to stay there. This very certainty and unchangeableness of the weather is possibly one reason why people in this part of the world generally leave the weather out of their conversation. Our work here consists in carefully recording barometer readings, temperatures, the direction and velocity of the wind, and the amount of the rainfall. The Indian Meteorological Department maintains four classes of observatories as follows:

FIRST-CLASS.—Observatories at which continuous records are obtained by means of self-registering instruments.

SECOND-CLASS.—Observatories at which observations are recorded three times daily, viz:—at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and 4 p.m.

THIRD-CLASS.—Observatories at which observations are recorded at 8 a.m. only, for transmission by telegraph to Simla, Bombay, Calcutta or Madras.

FOURTH-CLASS.—Observatories where observations of only temperature, wind direction and rainfall are recorded.

Bahrein belongs to the Third Class but transmits its records once a month only, by post, there being no telegraph here. Muscat is a true third Class station, transmitting its records daily by cable and telegraph to the head office. Kuwait is a fourth class station. I mention these three because the Arabian Mission is working in them, but it is to be noted that the Government of India maintains a Meteorological Observatory at every important place in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. There are also stations at Busrah and Baghdad. All these observatories are merely an accessory to the Meteorological Department of India, which is all the time extending its lines of investigation from India to Beluchistan and from Beluchistan far up into Persia. I have neither the time nor the space to go into the why and the wherefore of all this work—suffice it to say that one of the great objectives of the Government of India is to trace the sources of the Indian rainfall, that rainfall which means by its paucity or plenty, starvation or prosperity to 300,000,000 people.

The following is a list of the more important instruments supplied to us by the Government:

Barometer of the Fortin type; Dry Bulb Thermometer; Wet Bulb Thermometer; Maximum Thermometer; Minimum Thermometer;

Rain-Gauge, Symon's pattern; Wind-Vane, Voorhees' pattern; Anemometer, Robinson's pattern; Sundial, Government's own pattern.

Of all these instruments the Barometer gives us to-day the least information. I say to-day because no one knows how valuable the data that we are to-day accumulating may be to the future investigator. The variations, however, of this instrument are very slight from one end of the year to the other and in the present state of meteorological science tell us practically nothing in Bahrein. The only other instrument needing comment is the Anemometer which as its name implies is an instrument for measuring wind.

Meteorological observations in Bahrein were first commenced in September, 1901, by Dr. S. M. Zwemer so that we have now reached a point where an analysis of such observations begins to have real value. I quote here from "Instructions to Observers of the India Meteorological Department": "In order to determine the normal meteorological conditions of a place, accurate observations for a period of at least ten years are necessary." In other words, if you want a picture of Bahrein weather, consult the accompanying table.

And yet without some explanation this table is apt to be misleading. It is too general to be complete. Many a person looking over the Maximum column, for instance, would exclaim, "Why! It's no hotter there than it is here." To understand our temperature here one must know the topography of these islands. The Bahrein Archipelago is surrounded by large expanses of *shallow* water, with the result that (especially in the summer) there is an enormous amount of evaporation and a consequent very high percentage of humidity. This humidity keeps the thermometer down, but I can assure the reader that on a day when the dry bulb registers 94° and the wet bulb 90°—92° Bahrein is a place to be avoided by health seekers. When the thermometer goes to 100° or over in Bahrein it generally means that we have a dry wind from over the deserts (these days are comparatively rare here) so that the apparently hot days are thus the most comfortable.

The summer with us commences about the middle of April when the thermometer first touches the nineties—last year April 14th was the first day on which we had a temperature of 90° or over. April is usually a delightful month with soft fresh breezes and an occasional storm or cloudy day to vary the monotony. In May the weather is still pleasant though there is a steady and persistent rise of temperature all through the month with frequently a spell of very hot dry weather towards the end of the month. If the table is consulted it will be seen that in four of the ten years May was the month in which the highest Maximum Temperature for the year was recorded.

Analysis of Rainfall and Temperature Records—Jan. 1st, 1902, to Dec. 31st, 1911.

BAHREIN, PERSIAN GULF.

Year	Rainfall in inches	Temp. Max. 100° and over	Temp. Max. 60° and below	Temp. Min. 50° and below
1902	.85 5 wet days	11 Times, May 8, 106.5	1 Times, Jan. 29 59.9	10 Times, Dec. 12, 45.0
1903	3.32 7 "	32 " Aug. 7, 107.2	5 " Jan. 31, 56.5	2* " Feb. 6, 46.0
1904	1.62 6 "	7 " Aug. 28, 102.5	0 " "	1 " Feb. 4, 49.5
1905	1.59 7 "	10 " Sept. 2, 104.0	10 " Jan. 27, 49.8	10 " Jan. 27, 42.5
1906	1.31 5 "	6 " May 29, 107.5	0 " "	1 " Feb. 2, 49.8
1907	2.56 10 "	9 " May 28, 108.5	8 " Jan. 28, 51.5	9 " Jan. 28, 42.8
1908	1.13 10 "	10 " Aug. 23, 106.5	6 " Feb. 18, 55.0	5 " Feb. 15, 45.0
1909	4.08 14 "	18 " May 23, 107.0	5 " Dec. 27, 56.4	2 " Jan. 10, 48.5
1910	4.02 26 "	8 " July 17, 102.3	5 " Jan. 13, 49.8	5 " Jan. 14, 40.5
1911	6.21 26 "	11 " July 16, 107.4	20 " Jan. 25, 51.4	13 " Jan. 29, 42.2
	Average Rainfall for 10 years, 2.669	Highest Temperature for 10 years: May 28, 1907.....108.5	Lowest Maximum Temp. for 10 years: January 27, 1905 } 49.8 January 13, 1910 }	Lowest Temperature for 10 years. January 14, 1910.....40.5

In the 10 years the Thermometer went to 100° and over 122 times: May, 7 times; June, 12 times; July, 41 times; August, 59 times; September, 3 times.

In the 10 years the Thermometer went to 50° and below 58 times: January, 34 times; February, 14 times; December, 10 times.

\*Note:—In 1903 the Minimum Records are incomplete.

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Supt. Observatory, Bahrein.

It will also be noticed that the Highest Maximum Temperature recorded in the ten years occurred in the month of May (May 28, 1907). In June the approach of the real hot weather is still headed off by a Northerly Breeze which blows more or less steadily for forty days. This breeze, which is called "El Bareh," (or "the going out," due to the fact that in olden days sailors used to wait for this before starting on their long voyages) usually commences about the 10th of June. Its tempering effect is borne witness to by our records, which show that the thermometer rarely touches  $100^{\circ}$  in the month of June (on an average slightly over once a year) and also by the fact that the highest maximum temperature of the year has never been recorded in June. Towards the end of July "El Bareh" begins to weaken and with its disappearance come the stifling days that we all dread. Day after day without the suspicion of a breeze and the thermometer registering a mean temperature of about  $90^{\circ}$  for the 24 hours. August is by all odds the hottest month of the year, but with the appearance, about September 1st, of Canopus in the South South East just before dawn, we begin to feel a little more comfortable. Throughout September the mercury slowly descends and by the middle of October we may fairly say that the summer is over, although a temperature of over  $90^{\circ}$  has been recorded as late as November 10th. There is yet another element in the temperature of these latitudes that is not measured by scientific instruments—this has been referred to as the "quality" of the temperature—there is a great difference between a given temperature here and the same temperature in England or the United States. It is a difference in "quality" or kind, as well as in quantity. In this enervating climate a temperature of  $95^{\circ}$  seems hotter than at home, and a temperature of  $50^{\circ}$  seems colder than at home. One fairly good index of the length of our summer is the "Punkah" season—we hang our punkahs about the middle of April and we take them down about the middle of October. Six months. For those who do not know I may explain that a "punkah" is a curtain of varying length and about two feet wide—this curtain is suspended from the ceiling at a convenient height with its long axis horizontal and made rigid at its upper edge by being attached to a heavy pole—this curtain is pulled to and fro by a servant and as an effective fan it has not yet been surpassed by any modern mechanical device. It is not an Oriental idea—the story goes that an Englishman, worn out with the heat in India, wrenched a door from its hinges and had it suspended over his work table and pulled backwards and forwards to serve as a fan. It probably never occurred to an Indian that it was specially hot until



an Englishman told him. In any case very few natives ever use a punkah, though the custom is coming in a little, even in Bahrein.

So much for the summer—how about the winter? The winter months are December, January and February, with January “facile princeps” as the coldest month of the year. Last year we had a record cold snap with 20 days in January and February when the thermometer never reached 60°. Fifteen of these twenty days were in January. I shall not say much about the cold weather—to even call it cold weather will seem absurd to you people at home. The rainfall, too, must seem insignificant to you, but we had a storm last November that anyone might be proud of—hailstones as big as marbles fell for about ten minutes cutting up our trees quite badly, and rain to the amount of one inch fell in twenty minutes, with the



CHAPEL WITH TOWER-CLOCK.

result that the place was flooded until the water could soak away. There were also thunder and lightning to match. Rain is liable to fall here at any time from the end of October to the beginning of May.

In summing up this article one might point out that the weather in Bahrein seems to be changing—the rainfall is increasing—the summers are getting cooler and the winters are becoming colder. Of course, it is early to speak—ten years observations are not sufficient to justify such a deduction. It might also be remarked here that the reader must not judge all our Mission Stations by this article—the

weather in Busrah, Kuweit or Muscat varies greatly from the weather in Bahrein. All of these other places, for instance, are dry. Earlier in this article I mentioned that our observations as a third-class station were made at 8 a.m. This means accurate time, for observations are useless unless they are always made at the same time. Being off the telegraph we are obliged to manufacture our own time, which we do by means of a very excellent and accurate sun-dial. One is reminded of the song of the Australian bushman who sang "My clock is the sun and a right good one—It keeps good time and needs no winding." This dial gives us apparent time, which we correct to mean time by a table. This year the Arabian Mission has had the honor of erecting the first public clock in the Persian Gulf—the idea was Dr. Zwemer's, who raised the money for the clock by local subscription. The clock is of German manufacture, has a five foot dial and strikes the hours and half hours. It was put into position in the church tower by Messrs. Dykstra, Pennings and Shaw. They had several difficulties to overcome, not the least being the repair of a cog-wheel which was broken in transit. Dr. Zwemer was away in Baghdad when it arrived and on his return it was all in going order. It has been a matter of some dispute among the natives here because we keep English time on the clock and not Arabic. Arabic time, as you all know, is reckoned from sunset to sunset—sunset being 12 o'clock. This means that one must alter the clock almost every day in the year. Inaccuracy is a characteristic of the Arab so he does not mind this—the Mission, however, amongst other things, is here as a public educator and it surely will have gained something when it shall have taught the Arab the value of correct time. We point out to them that in all progressive Mohammedan countries like India and Egypt, Eastern time has given place to Western. In a word Eastern time is entirely unsuited to the needs of a work-a-day world. Our clock is one of the sights of the Gulf—almost every day groups of people may be seen at one time or another gazing at the clock and waiting with bated breath to hear it strike. Already my patients are making appointments with me by the new clock, "When the big clock strikes such an hour, I will come," say they. I believe that our clock when it first struck the hour of 5 p.m. on December the 20th, 1911, struck also the death-knell of Eastern time in Bahrein. At the back of the clock-dial Mr. Pennings has inscribed the words "So teach us to number our days that we may get us a heart of wisdom."

C. STANLEY G. MYLREA.

## The Lucknow Conference, 1911.

A meeting of the Literature Committee of the Lucknow Conference was recently held at Cairo, when attention was chiefly concentrated upon the ways and means of improving the production of literature and its increased circulation, and upon the method of securing more fervent prayer for greater spiritual results.

On the important subject of "A Medium of Exchange" the following action was taken:

*Resolved*, That attention be drawn to—

1. The urgent necessity for writers of spiritual articles in vernacular languages to co-operate with others by passing their MSS. in English with a view to re-translation into any other language desired.

2. The readiness of the Editors of *The Moslem World* to insert such articles in their exchange columns free of charge, this magazine being the best possible medium for such exchange, and

3. As a return for such service they feel that every one interested in the evangelization of Moslems should make an effort to send at least one new subscription to *The Moslem World*, 35 John St., Bedford Row, London; 4s per annum post free, or REVELL & Co., New York.



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EDITOR: REV. S. M. ZWEMER, D.D., F.R.G.S.

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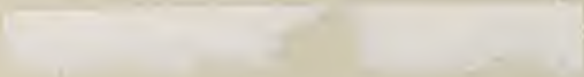
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